

The Leesburg Planning Commission met on Thursday, April 20, 2006 in the Council Chambers, 25 West Market Street, Leesburg, Virginia. Staff members present were Susan Swift, Barbara Beach, Mac Willingham and Linda DeFranco

### **CALL TO ORDER**

The meeting was called to order at 7:05pm by Chairman Wright

### **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE AND ROLL CALL**

Present: Chairman Wright  
Commissioner Bangert  
Commissioner Barnes  
Commissioner Hoovler  
Commissioner Kalriess  
Commissioner Moore  
Mayor Umstattd

Commissioner Burk was absent.

### **CHAIRMAN'S STATEMENT**

Chairman Wright reviewed the agenda for the evening which included the Public Hearing on the Crescent District Master Plan, Old Business regarding the ordinance agenda and any new business.

### **PETITIONERS**

None

### **PUBLIC HEARING**

Chairman Wright recapped the past history of the review of the Crescent District Master Plan, including several joint meetings with the BAR and EDC. Following this evening's discussion, any changes will be made and the plan will move on to Council level. He then called on Susan Swift to update the Commission on changes that were made since the last meeting.

Susan Swift made the following comments:

p. 30 – Regarding Town Branch – “Whichever option is selected the design will proceed through the Town's normal Capital Projects design and review procedures which will include BAR review since the project is located within the Old and Historic District.”

There was a comment on the skate park regarding a swap for open space in a more desirable location within the planning district. This statement was included on page 35.

Text regarding the connection of Industrial Court to the Boulevard was excluded from the plan – it needs to be added.

Staff had asked for a two foot change in the crosssection, the graphics were not changed.

The paragraph on transit was not changed. Should have included the following statement. “As a result of the District’s convenient location and mixture of uses, the town desires additional transit services and connections. This will also increase walkability and decrease parking demand. New development shall incorporate transit amenities and service enhancements where needed in coordination with County and VRTA transit goals.”

In the land use section there were changes in the RD blocks on page 21. the discussion centered on terminology. It should read “These blocks are envisioned to include multi-family townhomes and mixed use as shown on the land use map on page 19.”

On page 25, at the beginning of paragraph 3, there should be a reference of the maps on the preceding page.

On page 35 at the beginning, numbers 1 and 2, add #3 which refers to H-1 regulations remaining intact for anything occurring in the H-1 district.

Milton Herd of 303 Riding Trail Court, Leesburg, came forward to emphasize that he thought this was a great plan. The refinements are very good. His only concern is regarding structured parking. It is implied, but not set out in the plan. This district will be the new historic district 50 years from now. He thanked the staff, consultants and Commissions for their work on this.

The public hearing was closed at this time.

Commissioner Barnes agreed with Mr. Herd’s statements.

Commissioner Hoovler commented on page 33, he thought there would be a column added regarding aesthetics for the water feature. The use for the Catocin Skate Park is not currently noted as open space. It had been set aside for civic and institutional uses. On page 11 there is reference of a school site. This language should be consistent throughout the plan. Commissioner Bangert suggested that no specific use be alluded to, leave the use as civic/institutional. Mr. Hoovler then asked about Core mixed use blocks and whether H-1 guidelines allow for these uses? Susan Swift replied that the only use would be residential, however, they will look for future change. Chairman Wright added that the current zoning and H-1 regulations rule in that area. Mr. Hoovler then asked about the CMU, should structural parking be specifically mentioned in this area? With regard to parking, the last paragraph might be moved forward to the beginning of the

section. It seems to be more introductory. He thanked staff and the consultants for their work.

Commissioner Kalriess added that the paragraph on transit amenities should include encouraging the plan to develop public transportation amenities past bus stops and possibly through some privatization efforts also. Susan Swift responded that there were no specific amenities, but referred to the statement mentioned above.

Regarding projects with multiple buildings and the height variation, this is important. He would like to see the language strengthened.

Mayor Umstattd appreciates the Commission's consideration of citizen concern about heights. A good compromise has been reached. On page 25, the last phrase in the paragraph should be amended to read "provided the conditions outlined above or other conditions as the PC and Council deem appropriate are met". Regarding Mr. Hoover's discussion on parking garages, the approval of garages by special exception rather than by right. It makes sense to make the garages by right as long as they are wrapped. Why would we only want them wrapped on the first level? Wouldn't you want the wrap on all levels? Susan Swift responded that the reasoning is the use and the design of the structure. Total wrapping would increase the cost. Surrounding uses and size with regard to the surroundings also play an important role.

Chairman Wright commented that the second and third floors should also be controlled by architectural controls. Mr. Kalriess said there wouldn't be a builder that would put up just something on the first floor. They will either go underground, or above ground. The street visible portion will be important. Cost must be considered here, since parking structures are very costly.

The Mayor went on to comment on the setback requirements. Shorter setbacks should be considered, however, if you want streetside cafes, then the setbacks need to be back further.

Commissioner Bangert wanted to comment on the way the Old and Historic District is being depicted on the land use map. She suggested that the H-1 language set out before referring to H-1 regulations remaining intact for anything occurring in the H-1 district be added into the map legend. She also cautioned the Commission about the use of CDA's in today's versus future economic climates.

Mayor Umstattd made some further comment on the CDA's saying that she also did not want to see additional tax on residential units. Further discussion ensued on text that should generalize the variety of financing. The following text was suggested: The EDC Commission along with Town staff may assist . .

Commissioner Moore asked that there be some consistency in Crescent District versus District. Use one or the other throughout the document. There were some other inconsistencies that he asked be corrected.

Chairman Wright asked if the two open space parcels for Douglas should be labeled. All of the other parcels are labeled. It was suggested that they be labeled OS5 and OS6. With regard to the skate park, a swap is implied. Does the opportunity site paragraph really say that? It was determined that it is stated. Also should they add commentary on structured parking in the parking section?

Commissioner Kalriess has some suggested language as follows: “Finally the development of the building streetscape is intended to continue the existing pattern of differing building heights and mass. Projects with multiple buildings would be required to compliment the fine grain character of the district through varying height of building elements and fenestration of façades.” The point he is trying to make is the building heights do not necessarily have to differ, however, the fronts need to break up the potential of big blobs. Following some discussion on the use of the word fenestration, it was decided that this was the correct term and should remain.

Susan Swift offered the following language regarding structured parking: “Structured parking is encouraged in the Crescent District and should be architecturally designed so that it maintains a walkable street frontage and avoids the appearance of a massive structure.”

Milton Herd described a parking structure in Portland, Oregon that looked like the façade of a warehouse and how attractively it fit into the surrounding area.

Chairman Wright asked for any last minute comments on the text in the draft plan. There was discussion on the order of paragraphs on page 25, and some verbiage on page 36. At this point the Commission went through the remainder of the agenda while the edits were prepared.

### **OLD BUSINESS**

Chairman Wright mentioned the assembly changes on the charter amendments. Barbara Beach spoke about the charter bill before the General Assembly. She feels that Workforce Housing and some Budget items will need to be included. A charter is a state level authority, while it may not encompass the entire state, sometimes things can be put into effect locally through a charter. Ms. Beach would not be able to work on this until later in the summer. She would like to look at other charters and pull out authorities that they don't currently have. This would need to be complete by September. She asked Commissioners to send questions or comments to her.

Regarding the subdivision ordinance, the feedback is not all in yet. They have most of what they need but need more rewriting to clarify some issues. Chairman Wright asked if this included the enabling legislation on the transportation funding? Ms. Beach responded that yes, it did.

Commissioner Bangert asked if they could add the public facility ordinance to be part of the charter so that developers would be asked to put proffers in toward public facilities

also. Barbara Beach said that putting contributions into a fund could enable this to happen most effectively.

### **STAFF AND COMMITTEE REPORTS**

Commissioner Hoovler attended the EDC meeting and reported about the Bluemont Concert Series on the Courthouse lawn. There is an issue that the lawn is not being maintained when the concert series is using the area. The court feels that this shouldn't be an issue, but if it is, then something needs to be worked out. Either a maintenance plan or other ways of dealing with the problem. This is something that draws business to the downtown area on Sunday evenings. Betsey Fields brought the commission up to speed on the design of the entry signs for the civic organizations. They are going to consider an application for the Virginia Main Street program, and a draft of how to do business in Leesburg is in the works. Lastly, the Business appreciation awards will be presented in May.

### **NEW BUSINESS**

Chairman Wright mentioned the council resolution regarding the creation of a second BAR to supplement the existing BAR with review of the H-1 and H-2. They will receive a presentation from Annie McDonald setting out the reasoning behind this. Also, what does the enabling legislation do regarding two Boards. Barbara Beach commented that there was no prohibition about having more than one. Essentially a board can be created for certain districts of entry to a town, so a board for traditional history and a board for elements of the area are certainly not out of the question.

Mayor Umstattd commented that part of the motivation was for the H-2 corridor and for new infill projects such as the Crescent District.

Chairman Wright added that they are very busy with the Oaklawn area who proffered themselves into BAR review. The BAR is not prepared to make decisions on new developments such as this that are not part of the Old and Historic District. He asked if there were other questions they needed answers to prior to discussing this further. Barbara Beach said it might be helpful to obtain non historic BAR guidelines from other jurisdictions.

Commissioner Hoovler asked for an update of the JLMA/UGA Subcommittee. Commissioner Kalriess said they met to update the new member. They discussed the resolution put forth by the Council and what they needed to do to prepare for a meeting with the County Planning Commission. They also need to work on having the County recognize and approve the Leesburg Town Plan.

Commissioner Bangert mentioned a CPAM meeting that will be held on Monday that could have some impact on the areas surrounding Leesburg. She encouraged staff to attend.

Barbara Beach said the boundary line adjustment was passed for Festival Lakes. A joint order will be filed in the near future.

There was a break at 8:44.p.m.

The Commission reconvened at 8:52 and reviewed the suggested motion (attached) for approval of the Crescent District Master Plan.

Commissioner Kalriess moved that the Planning Commission adopt the Leesburg Crescent District Master Plan, draft dated April 11, 2006 to the Town Council, with the amendments drafted in the staff report and the draft motion with the following changes:

Item 3, second bullet – strike “minimizes a massive building”

Item 10, pages 11, paragraph 1. The heading on page 11 Paragraph 1 will be changed to read *Civic/Institutional Uses*. The last sentence would read The historic Douglas School and the school District properties nearby could accommodate civic or institutional uses.

Item 11, page 22 IN Blocks: revise last sentence to read: The plan suggests that this remain a civic use.

Item #1 add to page 26 – If redevelopment occurs, a *road* connection between Industrial Ct. and the boulevard should be constructed.

Item 5, on page 25, the last paragraph shall be amended to read as follows: Finally the development of the building streetscape is intended to continue the existing pattern of differing building heights and mass. Projects with multiple buildings will be required to compliment the fine grain character of the district through varying heights of building elements and fenestration of facades.

Motion: Kalriess

Second: Hoovler

Carried: 6-0-1

Chairman Wright thanked the boards and commissions that helped review this plan and assist in bringing it to the point it reached this evening.

### **ADJOURNEMENT**

The motion was made and seconded to adjourn at 9:11pm.

**Prepared by:**

**Approved by:**

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**Linda DeFranco, Commission Clerk**

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**Kevin Wright, Chairman**

## Attachment 1 – Draft Motion

I move to recommend approval of the Crescent District Master Plan, draft dated April 11, 2006, to the Town Council – subject to the following revisions:

1. add to page 26 – If redevelopment occurs, a pedestrian connection between Industrial Ct. and the boulevard should be constructed.
2. page 16 and 17 – revise cross-sections per engineering staff comments for gutterpans
3. page 18
  - add text regarding transit: “As a result of the district’s convenient location and mixture of uses, the Town desires additional transit services and connections. This will also increase walkability and decrease parking demand. New development shall incorporated transit amenities and service enhancements where needed in coordination with County and VRTA transit goals.”
  - Add new paragraph: “Design – Structured parking is encouraged in the Crescent District and should be designed so that it maintains a walkable street frontage, minimizes a massive building and adds architectural detail to blend with the surrounding uses.”
4. page 21 re: RD blocks. Delete last sentence and replace with: “ These blocks are envisioned to include multi-family, townhomes and mixed use, as shown on the Land Use Plan map on page 19
5. page 25, paragraph 3 add: “As shown on the map on the preceding page...”
  - Relocate text providing architectural conditions to the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph and change references accordingly.
6. page 30 – add as 2<sup>nd</sup> sentence: “Whichever option is selected, the design will proceed through the Town’s normal capital project desing and review procedures which will include BAR review since the project is located within the Old and Historic District.
7. page 35 – add : “ 3.The H-1 zoning district and Board of Architectural Review authority remain in effect as currently mapped.
8. page 4 – add same sentence above (re: H-1) to replace last sentence in insert box.
9. page 14 – Change text to match map showing boulevard ending at Rt. 7 rather than Edwards Ferry Rd.
10. pages 11, paragraph 1 – add sentence: This site could be considered for school or other civic uses.
11. page 22 – IN Blocks: revise last sentence to read: The plan suggests that this become an elementary school or other civic use.
12. page 33, add column to table re: aesthetics
13. page 19 – label Douglass Fields
14. page 36 – revise sentence in section 1.3 to read: “The EDC along with Town staff may assist in exploring a variety of financing options....?”
15. Revise for m
16. miscellaneous typos and page references.